

Opposition to HB 7150 Testimony

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Dear Education Committee:

I am writing you to ask you to join me in opposing HB 7150.

While it seems that some cost sharing by municipalities is necessary, the degree to which smaller towns are disproportionately burdened by the proposed bill is unacceptable, particularly when we have no power to negotiate pensions.

Towns such as my hometown of Wilton have a higher cost of living, which is why teachers earn more. We should not be penalized for this. Absorbing the pension costs proposed by the state will bring our town and school budgets to their knees. As a PTA member, I've witnessed firsthand how our school must make difficult cuts year after year. The cuts we would be forced into if this bill passed—staff, courses, special education cuts—would be the worst yet and could irrevocably affect the quality of our kids' educations.

Additionally, as municipal taxes are increased to help bridge the hole in our budget, a frightening burden will be placed on our residents, especially seniors. My 80-year-old mother in Ridgefield is already struggling to age in place in her home. I can't imagine how she could handle the increases.

I urge you to oppose HB 7150.

Respectfully,

Mary Varilla Jones